

**ECOSOC High-level Segment
Official launch of the Development Cooperation Forum**

**Palais des Nations, Geneva
5 July 2007**

Plenary session (9:30-11:00 am)

Pakistan (on behalf of G-77 and China) stated that the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), in fulfilling its mandate, should enable ECOSOC to conduct comprehensive review of the status and developments in international development cooperation and strengthen the linkages between the normative and operational work of the UN system. In addition, the Forum should promote closer linkages between system-wide operational activities and the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals. It was emphasized that the DCF should sustain a distinct identity while improving the governance, effectiveness and impact of development cooperation for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. The Forum would also enable ECOSOC to better carry out its mandate to promote coordination within the UN system.

It was outlined that the purpose of the DCF should be to ensure that development cooperation is responsive to the needs of developing countries; that there is adequate and appropriate quantity and quality of development financing; and that coordinated and coherent development cooperation achieves desired objectives and results. Referring to the existing framework on aid effectiveness as a useful beginning, the established indicators and benchmarks should be further elaborated to ensure mutual accountability and equal responsibility.

The effectiveness of the DCF will depend considerably on the nature and quality of documentation and data which should be prepared based on inputs by programme and donor countries as well international organizations and civil society. The analytical work will equally depend on the support prepared based on inputs by different development actors involved in development cooperation to provide information on their respective programmes and activities at all levels. Issues to be addressed by the DCF should emerge from the available information and data rather than being pre-determined long in advance, yet the Forum could decide, in advance, on a specific theme to be addressed.

Portugal (on behalf of EU) recognized that the United Nations' universal membership, neutrality and political independence enable it to play a unique role. The DCF could become an important coordination and cooperation mechanism in a context of multiple development actors, in particular considering that the Forum will be open to participation by all stakeholders. The Forum would also emphasize the role of ECOSOC as the policy coordination body of the United Nations for economic, social and environmental matters.

As one response to the emerging need for a deeper dialogue on development cooperation, the DCF was considered a useful contribution to the process of further implementing the

global partnership for development. With respect to the agenda, the DCF could address issues such as aid architecture, the implementation of the aid effectiveness agenda and the role of the whole range of donors. The dialogue should also contribute to ensuring that principles relevant to development cooperation, such as national ownership and leadership, are fully taken into account by all stakeholders

China supported the statement made by the Group of 77 and China and noted that clearly defining the goals, direction, priorities and modality of the DCF would be key to its success as the only recent UN mechanism that specifically works to comprehensively review international development cooperation. This would also enable the Forum to enhance the focus of the UN system on development cooperation. The focus should currently be to promote financing for development and the Doha trade talks, including the honouring of aid commitments and encouraging more innovative mechanisms for financing. In this process, the DCF should strengthen cooperation with the follow-up mechanism to the Financing for Development Conference.

With the international community facing both traditional and non-traditional security challenges, the Forum should keep abreast of the latest developments and study and respond to new trends and issues in international development cooperation, including in the areas of energy security and climate change. The DCF should use its advantage of bringing together a wide variety of stakeholders to promote closer partnership among the different development actors. In its work, the Forum should emphasize gradual progress, consensus and ensuring equal participation of developing countries.

The **United States** emphasized that basic indicators of aid effectiveness are of paramount importance. The questions of *where*, *when* and *how* aid can be most effectively applied should guide the work of the Forum since answering these questions are key in building and maintaining political support for development assistance from donors. Maintaining political support would also require that focus should be centered on measuring outputs and impact rather than inputs into the development process.

Switzerland noted the unique opportunity that the Forum provides in engaging all relevant development actors in a multistakeholder dialogue on development cooperation. The dysfunctional and uncoordinated aid architecture was identified as a common concern, yet the absence of consensus on the definition of a conceptual framework for ‘aid effectiveness’ was recognized as one of the major impediments. The Forum should therefore promote a common understanding for effective aid delivery in the true spirit of the existing framework for aid effectiveness. It was proposed that the DCF should provide comprehensive overview of funding channels and trends as well as promote consensus on enhancing the funding architecture. The clarification and strengthening of mutual accountability between development partners was also seen as key contribution by the Forum.

The **Russian Federation** highlighted the advantage of the United Nations as a universal platform which is able to ensure a non-exclusive dialogue on development cooperation. It was proposed that the Forum would focus on issues such as the effectiveness of

international development cooperation, including predictability and stability of funding; the role, interaction and harmonization of various donors as well as south-south cooperation within the framework of development cooperation. At the same time, it was mentioned that a balanced approach should be employed in selecting specific topics, reflecting the interests of a diverse donor community and countries supported by development assistance. Due consideration was requested with regard to integrating the DCF within the existing architecture of discussions on development assistance.